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Aubrey Pankey mourned in many countries

By BEATRICE JOHNSON

BERLIN, (by mail)--The tragic untimely death of world famous singer Aubrey Pankey in an automobile accident in the German Democratic Republic May 9 deeply shocked his many friends and relatives the world over.

At the time of his death, the 65-year-old Afro-American was involved in benefit concerts and other activities in the fight to free Angela Davis and the other political prisoners in the USA.

His pupils at the Hans Eisler College of Music will miss the knowledge and advice of this fine musician.

Aubrey and Kay Pankey found asylum in the German Democratic Republic after the long arm of the CIA and the infamous un-American Committee pressured the French government into expelling them from Paris. Many people in the USA will remember the international fight in 1953 to prevent the U.S. government

from cancelling the artist's passport and that on his return home subjected him to the same brutal persecution suffered by Paul Robeson.

The plan was to deprive Pankey of his right to sing to audiences outside the USA, and to restrict him to house arrest in his own country.

The U.S. witchhunters also persecuted Kay Pankey, his wife, when she refused to testify against her husband and six colleagues who worked with her in the Paris office of UNESCO. As a result her contract was broken and she was dismissed from her position in that international body.

After a successful concert tour in the capitals of Europe, the Pankeys settled in the German Democratic Republic in 1959.

Aubrey Pankey was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., and started his musical education at the age of 16. An orphan, he was forced to work at all sorts of jobs from the age of 15 onward to pay for

his school tuition and to live. He won a scholarship to the Hampton Institute, a Black high school in Virginia. After graduation he entered Oberlin College in Ohio and finally the Boston Conservatory of Music.

Later he succeeded in entering the Vienna Conservatory of Music. He also did post-graduate work in Germany.

He was always a part of the liberation struggle of the Black people in the USA and the struggle for world peace and a firm advocate of socialism.

Kay Pankey, his widow, lives at 117 Berlin Niebergall Str. 3, German Democratic Republic. She is editor of the English language books at the Seven Seas Publishing Company in Berlin.